

January 31, 2018

From: Osama Elbahnasawy – the father of Abdulrahman
To: Honorable Judge Richard M. Berman
United States District Judge
United States Courthouse
500 Pearl Street
New York, NY 10007

Dear Honorable Judge Richard M. Berman,

First of all I would like to thank you so much for allowing us to visit my son back after the jail banned us from visiting him for over than 6 months. Also thank you for hearing our concerns regarding my son's mental illness and isolation in Jail. All these issues made us confident that my son is in safe hands.

My name is Osama Elbahnasawy, I'm the father of Abdulrahman. I'm an IT Consultant has my own IT corporation doing IT consultancy work for the most Fortune 500 companies in U.S and Canada. I played a great role during the Iraqi invasion to Kuwait in 1990 as I used to work for the population system in Kuwait during that time. I helped in reestablish the Kuwaiti population information system from Bahrain and provided very valuable information about the population and demographic statistics to Kuwaiti government which they provided to the United Nations. Also I helped the United Nations in Geneva Switzerland to establish the compensation for the residence in Kuwait during the invasion based on the UN Security Council resolution 687. I also volunteer as a president of the Egyptian Canadian League which is non profitable organization to help the Egyptians in Canada in settlement, finding a job, and providing social opportunities and entertainments. My father is one of the consultants who helped in forming the early Kuwait constitution.

I have my lovely wife Khadiga and 2 children from her, my daughter Basma is 21 years old in the last year at faculty of engineering Digital Media at York University and my son Abdulrahman who will turn 20 years on Feb 21, 2018 who has a [REDACTED] and currently in jail and finished his GED in Jail and is working towards being a tutor in jail. I treated both my daughter and my son not as father and children, but as friends. So I used to play with my son soccer, basketball, diving, snorkeling, squash and bowling. We used to have a weekly meeting with

them to discuss their concerns, education, entertainments, vacation plan, any requests, and to know their rights and responsibilities.

The worst delivery in 25 years :

My son Abdulrahman born on Feb 21, 1998 at the Maternity Hospital in Kuwait. The delivery was so complicated and tough as my wife has Uterine Rupture during the delivery. The delivery doctor told me it was the worst delivery they had in the hospital since 25 years. In most of the cases either the baby or the mother or both could die during the delivery. He told me that he picked my son up hardly breathing from the fluid, which could have caused loss to his brain or his life. My wife stayed in the intensive care in the hospital for 2 weeks.

American school in Kuwait :

I put my son and my daughter in American school in Kuwait which was is expensive from **Pre-kindergarten** until we moved to Canada in 2005 almost 6 years for my daughter and 4 years for my son. Where all the teachers and the superintendent are either U.S citizens or Canadian. The reason for this because I was looking for better education for my kids

Moving to Canada :

In 2005 we decided to immigrate to Canada for a better life for my kids, despite me having a very good position, salary, relations, friends, and family in Kuwait. I sacrificed all of this for a better life for my kids. We insisted to put our kids in public school in Canada to be part of the society as we believe freedom, diversity and multiculturalism. We encouraged my kids to be involved in the society.

Hobbies and entertainments :

I subscribed my son in hockey but he didn't like it because he saw in the TV that hockey players punch each other during the game and my son doesn't like violence. I subscribed him in Taekwondo but also he didn't like for the same reason. My son likes soccer more because it doesn't have any violence or boxing during the game. My son is very peaceful and likes his family so much. He also likes those video games like PlayStation, Wii and Nintendo. When he reached 14 years old he lost interest of those sports and games and he became more isolated.

The beginning of drugs:

In March 2012 while my son is in grade 8 the teacher gave him a project about the advantage and disadvantage of Marijuana. He did a lot of researches in the internet to get A in this project

and he did. Unfortunately the internet has a lot of good information about the Marijuana which made him try it and I discovered this from the smell in the washroom and he was very honest as usual with me and he said yes I tried the Marijuana because its advantages is more that it's disadvantages. We tried to convince him not to do this again but he insists that it is useful for the health and used in a lot of medications.

Moving back to Kuwait :

In summer 2012 I got a job offer in Kuwait and I found it a good move so he will be away from his friends who bought him the Marijuana. We moved to Kuwait and I put my children in an American school so they have similar curriculum like in Canada and so my children won't get affected with this move

More drugs :

Unfortunately this move didn't prevent him from taking Marijuana but he tried all type of Drugs. He even tried huffing butane and he started seeing and talking to unexistent objects and he started to be scared from those objects.

Mental Health hospital in Kuwait :

In 2013 we told my son if you want to stay with us you need to go to doctors/ rehabilitations to recover from this addiction and because he likes his family so much he decided and insisted to be treated. So I took him to the hospital of addiction in Kuwait but because he was 15 years old he decided to put him in Kuwait mental health hospital. In this hospital I knew how much my son likes us. The withdrawal symptoms was very painful like very fast heart beats , headache , anxiety , vomiting , nausea , fatigue, tremor , sleep disturbances , depression and muscles pain. He went to Kuwait mental health hospital as inpatient around 3 times and each time he stayed there 6 weeks as per the hospital program and each time he relapsed and go back to the drugs. But because he likes his family and wants to make us happy he insists to continue his medications.

Canadian center for addiction and mental illness (CAMH) :

In summer 2014 we didn't find any benefits from Kuwait mental health hospital and my son was still suffering from the addiction. We decided to go to Canada in Summer 2014 as maybe we will find better treatment so we contacted CAMH the Canadian center for addiction and mental illness to continue his medications. Because he had suicidal thoughts they decided to keep him as inpatient and he stayed there for 6 weeks. After that we thought he won't go back to drugs but unfortunately he went back to drugs.

The journey of hope and love :

In Oct 2014 we discovered that medication in Kuwait and Canada didn't get any good results for him and we decided to try another type of medication upon a recommendations from Alnajahat for mental illness and addiction center in Kuwait who have over 25 years experience with the mental illness and addiction, they recommended we put my son in the Alriyada for mental illness and addiction Centre in Alexandria/Egypt. It has 90% of success in this field. We met with the staff before I put my son and they gave us an idea about the center and they didn't accept more than 12 patients and they told us sometimes the addiction could be because of the mental illness issue and "our center is very strong on this as we have 24/7 supervision from

psychiatrist, psychologist, social workers, addiction coach, supervisors and staff". They told us most of their staff were patients at the center and they recovered from the addiction. They use the 12 steps program. Originally this program proposed by Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). Really the center is very good, amazing and my son accepts to stay in the center. We use to go to Alexandria/Egypt from Kuwait every weekend to visit him, encourage him and entertain him.

The [REDACTED] :

We use to have a meeting with the team at Alriyada for mental illness and addiction Centre every 2 weeks to give us an idea about the progress in my son's medication. On May, 2015 they told us in the meeting that they discovered that my son has [REDACTED] and they said the [REDACTED]. They told us this is the main reason why my son is taking drugs and they told us also that if he takes the [REDACTED] each day he will be good and away from drugs. My son stayed in this center 7 month (From Oct 2014 until June , 2015).

Admitted from the center :

On June , 2015 Alriyada for mental illness and addiction Centre told us that my son is now in the 4th stage from the 12 stage program and now he can exist the center but we have to keep an eye on him, don't give him too much money and keep him away from anything that reminds him with drugs like certain friends, places etc. Really we found my son is a new person, they taught him in the center a lot of techniques, and behaviors on how to deal with his illness.

Paris and London :

After my son exists Alriyada for mental illness and addiction Centre I took him with the family to Paris and London for a family vacation. During this trip my son was so nice, has his head phones in his ear listening to music. It was a very nice 2 weeks journey

Back to Canada (Aug , 2015) :

My son told us that he wanted to be a good person and continue his education after he missed one year so I decided to resign from my work in Kuwait and go back to Canada. According to doctors advises my son should be away from drugs so we started looking for a school in Canada which has no drugs or at least less drugs. After asking and discussions we found that the Islamic high school is the best choice for him because he has some of his good friends in that school and my son accepts to be in this school and he is so happy to come back to Canada

No Drugs but [REDACTED] (Oct , 2015):

My son told us that these medications made him fat and sleepy and he can't be sleepy in the school as his friends will laugh at him so he decided not to taking his medications. I contacted his psychiatrist in Egypt he told me this is a very big problem and your son could go back to drugs. I told him this, but he insists not to take his medications. The [REDACTED] were very clear after stop the medications such as :

- 1) Can't sleep
- 2) Mood swing

- 3) Talking too much
- 4) Arguing too much
- 5) Want to fix the whole world problems
- 6) A lot of movements
- 7) Isolation from friends except in the internet
- 8) Can't take the right decision.
- 9) Doesn't want to go to school

Project in the school (Nov , 2015) :

The history teacher at the school asked him to make a project about Ottoman Empire, political since in Islam and how they elect the president in Islam. So my son as usual start looking about this in the internet and he did a very good project, but as in the Marijuana project he also started asking about how they elect the president in Islam and why there is no Islamic president ruling his country with Islamic law and too many arguments. Me and my wife discovered that this is part of his [REDACTED] and this is a result of not taking his medications.

The referral (Feb 2016) :

We decided to contact his family doctor asking for help we gave him all the medical reports which proves that my son has a [REDACTED] and we told him about how much we are suffering from him as he started throwing out the coffee, tea , Pepsi , coca cola in the garbage because they have hidden drugs inside them which no one know about it apparently except him. The Family doctor understood our request and our concern that we don't have his medicine and we can't get it without prescription and he decided to made a referral to psychiatrist.

No psychiatrist available (from Feb ,2016 until now) :

I started following up with the family doctor about my son's referral and I asked her please do all your best to have a good [REDACTED] psychiatrist. Every time I called she said no one can accept your son because either they are busy or they are not specialist in the [REDACTED]. I started search in the internet about [REDACTED] psychiatrist I found some I called them asking them please I have a problem with my son as he has a [REDACTED] and not taking his medications and he creates a lot of problems in the house please accept him. They told me ask your family doctor to send the referral to us which I did and I called her again to follow up she told me your referral is at the psychiatrist desk but he doesn't have time to look at it. She advised me to go to psychologist instead, her name is Dr. Laura Thomson which I did and they gave me an appointment in 23rd of May , 2016.

Back to Egypt to get the medications (March , 2016):

My wife and I found that the way to the psychiatrist in Canada will take too much time so we decided to send her to Egypt to get the medications and she did. My wife bought with her 10 boxes from each medicine plus a grinder machine to make the medicine powder so she can put it to him in the food.

Back to medicine (May , 2016) :

My wife came back from Egypt on April 29th, 2016 with the medicine plus a grinder machine and started putting to him half tablet in the food and we discovered that there is slight progress in his behaviors.

Family Vacation to New York (May , 2016) :

Our family including my son likes New York so much and if there is any long weekend in Canada I used to take the family to New York because it is also near to Canada. Last time we were in New York was on Oct, 2015 and we went more than 5 times in the last 3 years. We went through the border as usual without any issues. I drove 8 hours inside the United States until I reached the hotel in New Jersey we reached the hotel around 10 PM on May 21,2016.

The arrest (Saturday May 21,2016) :

When we arrived at the hotel and in the hotel parking lot we found 5 cars surrounded our car and they open the door which near to my son and they took him. I told them why you took my son they said we will let you know in the police station. They ask me to follow their car which I did and we went to the police station and they said your son was on the chatting in the internet with an informant and told him that he support ISIS. We told them that my son has a [REDACTED] and this is part of his illness they were shocked and my wife gave them the medications to give it to my son because it is dangerous to stop the medication suddenly and they promised her that they will send this medications to the FBI laboratory and if they found this is a medication for the [REDACTED] they will give it to him. I insist and asked them to search our car and my son's bag which they did and they didn't find anything.

The warrant (Sunday May 22,2016) :

When we came back from New York we found that the RCMP (the Canadian FBI) searched our house and left a paper about items they took (play station , 2 books and the router) the date on the warrant is Sunday May 22,2016 at 6 PM (18 hours after the arrest) which means they are cooperated with the FBI and prepared everything to take my son during our family vacation and they didn't find anything in our house.

The FBI and the RCMP knows about my son's mental illness before the arrest :

We started collecting all my son's medical reports and one of those reports is the report from CAMH (The Canadian center for addiction and mental illness) they gave us all my son's file which has around 600 pages one of the pages we found a letter from the RCMP to CAMH on May 16th,2016 (one week before the arrest) asking about my son mental issue and CAMH replied to them on the same day with all my son's mental and addiction issues. Which means that the FBI and the RCMP knows that they dragging a mental illness boy.

The informant role in the case :

Here are my findings:

- 1) The informant job is to catch ISIS supporter people from the internet and we understand this.
- 2) The informant is a very well trained person and knows how put the rope around the neck of the prey and we can't compare his experience with my son

- 3) My son met the informant or ISIS people during his search about the Ottoman Empire , political since in Islam project from the school. They found him is eager to know about political since in Islam so they catch him and provided him with wrong information about ISIS and they used his mental illness toward their benefits
- 4) The informant knows that my son has an addiction illness (my son told me this)
- 5) The informant encouraged my son to ran away from his family during the vacation and provide the accommodation and the equipment
- 6) The informant is the boss for this operation and without his support , information , accommodation this won't happen
- 7) We believe that my son was a victim in the war between ISIS and U.S and they used his mental illness to catch him
- 8) The FBI and the RCMP are aware of my son's mental and addiction illness from CAMH report
- 9) The FBI and the informant knows that my son won't do anything and this is part of his illness and the proof of this is how they allow a very dangers person to cross the borders and be inside the US for 8 hours without catching him they are not scared that he ran away. Also why they didn't wait until he meets with the informant and catch him. Also they didn't provide the last 8 hours from the chatting between my son and the informant which mean my son refused to do what the informant told him to do and this is why they didn't provide this texting.
- 10) The informant gave my son wrong explanations for the Quran verses to encourage him to go with him

Brave heart:

We completely understand the FBI and RCMP role to protect U.S and Canada in catching the terrorist people before they do bad things and we support them in this role but we want them to have the brave to say that we catch a [REDACTED] boy by mistake this is will put a trust in their work and people will respect this

Supporting the court decision :

From Day one we support the court decision to keep the case sealed even when the jail took the decision to forbidden us from visiting my son for one and half year and put him in SAMs and Shu and we know that this could affect his brain and we only can talk to him 15 minutes each month. We respect the court decision and didn't go to the media to complain and put pressure on the Canadian government. Even when the case became public and the media surrounded our house just to say anything we didn't say anything because we trust the court and the judge justice. The media discovered from the documentations which the court released that my son has a [REDACTED]

Supportive family:

We always very supportive families toward my son's mental illness as you see from our story we moved from 4 different apartments in Kuwait during 3 years just to keep my son memory away from the places which he used take the drugs in. We are vesting my son in Jail every week regardless how far is the jail from our house we use to spend \$ 1000 per visit for the transportation and the accommodation but we insist to visit him because we want to make him away from depression and isolation. We took sessions with therapist about [REDACTED] to see how we can support my son after the arrest also we are part of 2 main [REDACTED] family groups so we know how to deal with my son after the arrest. We

bought to him a very good psychiatrist and psychologist to help us with my son's medications after jail.

The fear from rape in prison :

One of the main reasons which made my son not taking his medication in Jail because the medication made him go into very deep sleep and he is afraid any prisoner could rape him during the sleep.

Nice boy :

My son is always a very nice boy, funny , never ever use violence against anybody he always apologize if he did any type of mistake. Please see what his friend at the Canadian center for addiction and mental illness (CAMH) say about my son in the newspaper when they know from my son's Facebook that he is a friend of my son. He said ("If we helped those with mental illness more seriously, he wouldn't be in this mess."). He added that ("El Bahnasawy was "the funniest guy you'll ever meet" and got along with the other patients.") he also added (**"I think he simply found people who truly accepted him. He liked the feeling of being somebody one can depend on"**). All those information and more in the below link in the star newspaper.

<https://www.thestar.com/news/world/2017/10/10/mississauga-teen-linked-to-nyc-terror-plot-suffered-from-drug-addiction-mental-health-issues-documents.html>

Eager with shopping , hesitated and never fulfill his promises :

Abdulrahman always like to wear brand names but if anyone told him it is not nice he don't wear it again also I remembered one day he asked us to go for skiing and we went 2 hours north to find a ski resort and after we reach there he refused to go from the car for skiing and said I don't want to ski who told you bring me here. Sometimes he told his friends that I will bring cake but he didn't bring. For the hesitation issue I refer to the case how many times he accepted and refused the lawyers from his family. We discovered latter that this is part of his illness.

Looking for better future :

We put around \$ 30,000 toward my son's RESP (Register education saving plan) for my son's undergraduate studies and we can't withdraw those money for anything else except his education. Also we put around \$ 25,000 toward my son's medications if needed. We know the future will be better. We believe that injection which they discovered for the [REDACTED] will help in my son's medications better than the tablets as they gave it once every 3 month and if we know about this before the arrest we could do it and prevent this dilemma . Also we can issue community treatment order via his psychiatrist which allow us to be responsible for his treatments and medications

Hope and Please :

- 1) We know that my son learned a big lesson from this case and he will take his medications and become a good person as he took the GED and send a request to be math teach in jail.

- 2) My son never ever did any type of violence behavior even when he was under drugs he never ever steal money , shout , hit or any violence toward me or my wife or my daughter or anybody
- 3) We know that the jail is not a suitable place for [REDACTED] boy due to isolation, lake of medications, lake of psychiatrist, psychologist...etc.
- 4) We are ready for any orders or requests toward my son to make sure he is a good person like put us as a guarantor for him or any other things which your honor find it will be useful.
- 5) Criminal record in my son's file in this young age will destroy his future as the [REDACTED] is not his mistake this is something out of his control and he is not responsible for
- 6) Can you please protect our family especially mu daughter is in the age of marriage and this will affect her future.

Sincerely

Osama Elbahnasawy

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Osama Elbahnasawy', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.